

## Message Text

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21

ACTION NSF-02

INFO OCT-01 NEA-06 ISO-00 OES-03 ABF-01 FS-01 RSC-01 /015 W  
----- 001725

R 160935Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7436

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DEPT PASS NSF AND NEA/AFN

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: OSCI, TS

SUBJECT: SFCP-UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PROPOSAL FOR  
NEW SPECIAL FOREIGN CURRENCY PROJECT

1. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED FROM PROFESSOR CLEMENT MOORE HENRY OF DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, ANN ARBOR, PROJECT PROPOSAL FOR NEW SFCP TO BE FUNDED BY NSF ENTITLED "ADEQUACY OF TRAINING OF HIGH TUNISIAN OFFICIALS FOR THE NEEDS OF THE COUNTRY", TO BE CARRIED OUT IN COLLABORATION WITH TUNISIAN CENTER FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STUDIES AND RESEARCH (CERES). DR. HENRY PLANS ARRIVE TUNIS NOVEMBER 21 FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH CERES AND OFFICIALS OF MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

2. EMBASSY STRONGLY OPPOSES PROPOSED NSF FUNDING OF THIS PROJECT ON POLITICAL GROUNDS. PROJECT PROPOSAL CALLS FOR IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWING OF APPROXIMATELY 300 HIGH-LEVEL TUNISIAN OFFICIALS TO DETERMINE MAJOR PRACTICAL PROBLEMS THEY FACE, ADEQUACY OF THEIR EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUNDS, AND THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARDS TECHNICAL EXPERTS UNDER THEIR SUPERVISION AND A BROAD RANGE OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL TOPICS. OBJECT OF THE STUDY IS TO TRANSFORM "A MICRO-ANALYSIS OF ATTITUDES TO A MACRO-ANALYSIS OF GOVERNMENTAL PERFORMANCE" BY COMPARING ATTITUDES WITH SKILLS OF OFFICIALS IN SAMPLE GROUP.

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EMBASSY FEELS THAT FINANCING OF THIS PROJECT BY USG

WILL APPEAR TO MANY TUNISIANS (BOTH IN AND OUT OF GOT)  
AS OFFICIAL AMERICAN ATTEMPT TO PRY INTO OPERATIONAL  
DIFFICULTIES OF TUNISIAN MINISTRIES AND INTO PRIVATE  
LIVES OF THEIR OFFICIALS.

3. EMBASSY DISAGREES WITH PROJECT PROPOSAL STATEMENT  
THAT ATTITUDINAL QUESTIONNAIRE IS "HIGHLY GENERAL",  
ESPECIALLY IN A TUNISIAN CONTEXT. OFFICIALS ARE ASKED  
TO RESPOND TO ASSERTIONS SUCH AS THESE: "CERTAIN  
PEOPLE ARE BETTER QUALIFIED TO LEAD THIS COUNTRY BECAUSE  
OF THEIR TRADITIONS AND FAMILY BACKGROUND." "IN A  
WORLD AS COMPLICATED AS THE MODERN ONE IT DOESN'T MAKE  
SENSE TO SPEAK OF INCREASED CONTROL BY ORDINARY CITIZENS  
OVER GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS". "IT WILL ALWAYS BE NECES-  
SARY TO HAVE A FEW STRONG, ABLE INDIVIDUALS WHO KNOW  
HOW TO TAKE CHARGE." "THE FREEDOM OF POLITICAL PROPOAGANDA  
IS NOT AN ABSOLUTE FREEDOM, AND THE STATE SHOULD CARE-  
FULLY REGULATE ITS USE." PROPOSAL ADMITS THAT SEVERAL  
ATTITUDE QUESTIONS USED IN OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE ALREADY  
BEEN CUT AS "INAPPLICABLE TO TUNISIA".

4. OUTLINE TO BE FOLLOWED BY INTERVIEWER CONTAINS  
QUESTIONS SUCH AS: "DO YOU LIKE POLITICAL SIDE OF YOUR  
WORK?" "TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU PERSONALLY CONSIDER  
ECONOMIC PLANNING APPROPRIATE AND WHAT FORM SHOULD IT  
TAKE?" "THINKING OVER THIS DISTRIBUTION OF POWER  
(AMONG INTEREST GROUPS), DO YOU THINK THIS IS ALL AS IT  
SHOULD BE, OR SHOULD THERE BE SOME IMPORTANT CHANGES?"  
"HAVE ANY OF YOUR RELATIVES BEEN IN THE CIVIL SERVICE  
OR ACTIVE POLITICALLY?" "IN GENERAL, DO YOU CONSIDER  
THAT RELIGION PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN YOUR LIFE?"  
"DO YOU ATTEND THE MOSQUE REGULARLY OR NOT?"

5. IT HARDLY SEEMS NECESSARY TO POINT OUT THE EXPLO-  
SIVE NATURE OF SUCH AN INQUIRY IN THIS PART OF THE  
WORLD. EMBASSY OPPOSES U.S. SUPPORT THIS STUDY  
AND WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION IF DR. HENRY OBTAINS  
PRIVATE FUNDING. IN UNLIKELY EVENT HE RECEIVES  
GOT APPROVAL (AS DISTINGUISHED FROM CERES). HOWEVER,  
EMBASSY SIMPLY CANNOT CONCEIVE OF OFFICIAL USG  
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BACKING FOR SUCH A PROJECT, WHICH WOULD LAST A YEAR AND  
A HALF WITH CONTINUAL ACTIVE AMERICAN PARTICIPATION  
HERE IN TUNIS.

6. IN LIGHT OF ABOVE, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT NSF  
RECONSIDER ITS ENCOURAGEMENT OF DR. HENRY IN THIS  
PROJECT AND SUGGEST THAT HE CANCEL HIS PROPOSED  
TRIP SCHEDULED TO BEGIN NOV 20.

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 16 NOV 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** cunninfx  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Office:** ACTION NSF  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 3  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** cunninfx  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 26 AUG 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <26 AUG 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <13 MAR 2003 by cunninfx>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SFCP-UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PROPOSAL FOR NEW SPECIAL FOREIGN CURRENCY PROJECT  
**TAGS:** OSCI, TS  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005